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some experience are identical traditions, there follows the readily accepted assumption that the world contains different kinds of knowledge and different truths.

Despite the fact that the Indian lacks the ability to formulate ideas in strict chronological sequence (we have already referred to the difficulties experienced in securing chronological life histories), he may be credited with a historical sense. Examples of native history have been presented in reporting the traditional ideas of Kaska origins and the memories of life in the aboriginal society. This material is distinguished by its static, rather than dialectic quality, no attempt being made to relate the events which are described. As pointed out in connection with acculturation, the Kaska are not attracted to the past. There is relatively little interest in hearkening back to aboriginal times, certainly no sentimentalism. Only occasionally will a contemporary incident move some man to describe the event as similar to behavior which was commonplace in former days. Such historical attitudes promise that in one or two more generations the ability to report "old fashioned" life will have entirely disappeared.

ETHICS

Ethically and morally, as well as philosophically, the Kaska are inclined to be relativistic, particularly when non-Indian behavioral norms are discussed. Thus people asked the cringe register if it was true that white people sometimes married their parallel cousins, whom the Kaska classify as siblings. An affirmative answer met with no criticism or repugnance. Moral relativism is noted chiefly in connection with marital and sexual behavior, aggression and lack of generosity are not so tolerantly regarded. In the latter fields, the Indians tend to recognize more absolute values. Thus the second World War appeared to confuse many informants, and local traders are often criticized for neglecting to meet the Indians' standard of generosity.

The Kaska express the same theoretical conflict between free will and determinism that is familiar to students of western society. As evidence of determinism we may cite the fact that a person is thought to be bad because he has "bad blood." This evil disposition is inherited, so that an evil man produces evil children. Opposing these ideas is the belief that an evil person can be taught to control his behavior. It is possible too for a good man to produce bad children, since it is often through error that good people commit evil—they "make mistake." Although this conflict between free will and determinism comes out in interviews, in everyday life there is little question of the moral accountability of the individual.

Abstract ethical ideals, like righteousness and justice, have little meaning for the Indian. When forced to concern himself with formulating ideal conceptions of human nature, he is primarily concerned with such concrete individual and social virtues as generosity, industriousness, peaceful, courage, skill, and (in women) marital chastity.

The ideal man is free of all greediness. He gives good gifts and helps out a friend who is in need of food or of some material goods like tobacco or cartridges. A good man is not pugnacious or "mean"; he is disinclined to unfriendly gossip and hypocrisy, nor does he seek to exert authority. He avoids talking undesirably about his friends, is not cranky, and will not fight unless unduly provoked. Putting these traits more positively, virtue may be recognized as a pleasant disposition. A good man is ready to laugh and eager for fun. When he drinks he enjoys himself, but "he don't fight nothing." Finally, the ideal male reflects industry. He is,

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as Nida explained, a "good trapper. He watch his trap line. Every two days he look his traps, fix his traps. He hunt too." He keeps his larder well supplied with meat, wood, and grub. The ideal man shows courage without being foolhardy. "Somebody fight him, he tell him: 'Don't fight.' He save his life that way." Associated with the idea of courage is the ability to withstand discomfort. A good man must be "tough," able to travel long distances on foot, while bearing up under cold and hunger. In his ideal proportions a man shows skillfulness; he traps well, can make necessary tools, apparatus, and vehicles, and undertake a variety of repairs. Male informants did not report marital faithfulness as an ideal masculine virtue.

The primary qualifications for the ideal woman are faithfulness, thrift, industry, and skill. "You get a good woman," Nida explained, "He can't leave you. Me, I want him. [If] I watch that girl: 'You leave him, that fellow'—that kind of woman no good. Good woman—try, try I get him—he don't want me. That number one woman. Smart woman." Not only does the concept of marital faithfulness include an absence of extramarital promiscuity, but it also denotes a wife's devotion to her husband, her care for his welfare and comfort. A woman's thrift also reflects her virtue. Thus Old Man often praised his wife for the manner in which she earned money by trapping and selling her own fur, saving the proceeds. So far as a woman's industriousness is concerned: "Good woman wash clothes, do something, cook anything. Fix the places. Damn number one woman. That woman just the same queen. She catch fur too. She help her man. Best one." Feminine virtue includes skill. A good woman can cook well, trap effectively, lace good snowshoes, and make outstanding moccasins and clothes. A skilful industrious woman will not visit around too often but spends most of her time keeping her camp in order. Courage is not valued in a woman. Generosity, with those objects which a woman controls, and absence of aggression are further female virtues. An ideal woman may drink, but in doing so she "look after her man; wouldn't bother another man. Just talk fun."

RELIGION

Religious beliefs are of minor importance in Kaska life and the culture includes no religious ceremonials beyond the Mass and other introduced Catholic devotions. The general conception of the supernatural consists of an imposition of Christian (Catholic) attitudes on vague and disappearing elements of native belief. Both the Christian and the aboriginal elements are loosely comprehended, although an attempt has begun in the mission schools to formalize Christian beliefs in children. The general orientation of the religion tends to place all natural phenomena, including human life, in a universe controlled by supernatural agencies or "bosses." Since the techniques for soliciting this supernatural power are little stressed the individual—as well as all of nature of which he is part—would seem to enjoy a kind of fatalistic existence. This deduction is partly belied by the fact that the relative absence of supernatural supplications does not stem from attitudes of fatalism, but rather from an especially grounded idea that in everyday things the individual's persistence and activity must also be counted on to solve problems of living.

Three main orders of the supernatural environment are distinguished by the Kaska. The first of these contains the executive agencies of natural phenomena—the "bosses" of the

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Upper Liard

685 Sanctions invoked to enforce property conceptions failed to be made explicit by informants. Probably they included the application of individual force, expressed verbally or physically, with the consent of the community. That is to say, if a man could not claim that to which he felt a right he might seize the goods and in the process perhaps inflict punishment on his rival. Property offenses also earned offenders an unfavorable public opinion. No force was used to compel a person to share meat but "We had a cache too. We could do the same thing. We won't give him much." Reciprocity therefore constituted one device serving to maintain the pattern of food sharing.

681 The aboriginal community found itself compelled to deal with lying, assault, manslaughter, infanticide, murder, cannibalism, sorcery, incest, unwed motherhood, adultery, and treason. A common form of lying consisted of a person returning from a [677] hunt and telling exaggerated stories of the amount of game that he had seen. Not many such accounts were needed before the liar found himself regularly disbelieved. Against slander a quick tempered man reacted by killing his calumniator. Injuries inflicted due [672] to assault were settled by payment, a distinction apparently being made between wounds deliberately inflicted and those resulting accidentally. At least, no payment followed in the case of hurts secured from children's play. Likewise the people distinguished manslaughter from murder. In event of the former no vengeance followed but a payment, considerably lower than that obtaining in the case of murder, was expected. An Indian who committed manslaughter might be adopted in place of the deceased.[164] People would drive out of the community a woman whose neglect caused her child to 847 starve. "Let her starve," the people said in the hope that other people would thereby learn the necessity of treating each other more kindly. Infanticide of either a girl or boy infant merited severe scolding. The temptation to kill a baby appears to have been limited to cases where offspring resulted from incestuous unions. Such a child was sometimes killed in the birth camp, the mother stuffing its mouth with moss. The informant recalled no instance of abortion but he thought the deed would have been classified as murder.

682 Murder might be settled through a large payment, made in installments running over a year or more, or by blood revenge. Weregild required the cooperation of all the members of the murderer's family. Vengeance constituted the duty of the victim's brother or uncle (father's brother?) and was never undertaken by a father. Retaliatory action always went against the actual killer and not against members of his family.[165] It is not

[164] Among the Tlingit "any crime may be paid for on a money basis." (Jones, *Study of the Tlingits of Alaska* [1914], 193.) Weregild is stated to follow in restitution for murder and manslaughter among certain Kwakiutl tribes, the Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit Chilkat. Ivanhoe, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1930), 221.

[165] "The original Indians claiming the country of the Upper Pelly and its tributaries have completely disappeared with the exception of one old woman. . . . The main cause for this is quarreling amongst themselves. . . . generally started by two men fighting and one killing the other, when the relations and friends would take the quarrel up and kill the first man or some of his relatives to get even and so they would keep the quarrel going until one party were all dead or so weakened that for a time they were satisfied to stop. Secondly, by stronger tribes making raids on them and killing the men and taking their women away with them. . . ." Field, *Unpublished manuscript* (1913), 1.